

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0K2

APR 07 2020

General J. H. Vance
Chief of the Defence Staff
Major-General George R. Pearkes Building
101 Colonel By Drive
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0K2

General,

I received a Request for Assistance (RFA) from the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness (MPS) for the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) to support the whole-of-government response to COVID-19 and natural disaster emergency activities, with the understanding that the CAF is intended to be a force of last resort, that all other options reasonably available to requestors have been exhausted before CAF support is considered, and that the proposed assistance does not unduly place the CAF in competition with the private sector or if the private sector cannot respond quickly enough.

Accordingly, I am writing to direct that you issue instructions to the CAF to provide logistic and general support, and transportation and infrastructure support, as outlined below. I also direct that you issue instructions to the CAF to provide humanitarian relief to Canadians. Given that the national response to COVID-19 will coincide with the natural disaster season, I am also directing you to provide CAF assistance to domestic natural disaster emergency response activities. Finally, as I consider that the assistance is in the national interest and that the matter cannot be effectively dealt with except with the assistance of the CAF, I will approve CAF assistance to law enforcement authorities on a case-by-case basis based on your military advice in circumstances described in this letter, and where there is no requirement to detain, arrest or use force with respect to any person. The assistance described above is to be provided as CAF capacity allows, and to the extent that it does not degrade CAF military preparedness to continue ongoing operations.

As such, pursuant to section 273.6(1) of the *National Defence Act* (NDA), I direct the CAF to provide the following support, including but not limited to:

- Provide planners and liaison officers to Provincial/Territorial levels of government and Federal Regional Offices to assist with planning of a CAF contribution to regional containment efforts;
- Establish dispersed command and control nodes in support of lead agencies;
- Provide infrastructure for use by interdepartmental/intergovernmental teams;
- Facilitate the evacuation of designated communities and vulnerable populations;

Canada

1/3

- Assist with the monitoring of critical infrastructure;
- Assist with the coordination and delivery of goods and supplies to distribution centres and to OGD partners when private vendors are not readily available to conduct the task; and
- Engineering support to interdepartmental camps/containment work (i.e., field engineers, construction engineers, heavy equipment, etc.).

In addition, I direct the CAF to provide the following humanitarian relief assistance, including but not limited to:

- Conduct wellness checks for designated vulnerable populations, when advisable to do so;
- Assist in water purification;
- Assist in establishing and operating alternate care sites;
- Provide limited assistance with civilian patient management including triage, secondary assessment and treatment of COVID-19 patients within CAF capabilities;
- Assist Health Canada, Public Safety and Provincial/Territorial health agencies in providing information to persons that may be affected by COVID-19;
- Provide limited assistance with civilian patient management including triage and secondary assessment of vulnerable populations (i.e., rural/remote, indigenous, prison inmates); and
- Support the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) or Provincial/Territorial health vaccination programs when COVID-19 vaccination is available.

Pursuant to NDA section 273.6(2), I will assess and authorize the CAF to provide assistance in respect to the following law enforcement matters, on a case-by-case basis based on your military advice, where there is no expected requirement to detain, arrest, or use force with respect to any person:

- Providing logistical and general support, as well as transportation, and infrastructure assistance to law enforcement officials.

In addition, I direct that the CAF be prepared to provide the following types of law enforcement assistance, subject to my approval:

- Supporting law enforcement officials in the enforcement of COVID-19 related orders under Provincial/Territorial and Federal legislation, including the *Quarantine Act* on a case-by-case basis; and
- Supporting law enforcement officials in the enforcement of evacuation orders.

Security-related tasks in support of law enforcement will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and will require my approval even if a RFA is approved to a Province/Territory.

Requests for the CAF to conduct security related activities or requests for the CAF to provide assistance with respect to law enforcement matters beyond what is outlined in this letter, will require my further consideration.

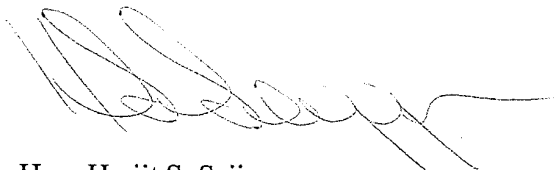
Finally, pursuant to NDA section 273.6(1), I direct the CAF to support natural disaster emergency activities, including but not limited to:

- Evacuation assistance:
 - Providing air, inland maritime and ground support to facilitate the evacuation of persons affected by flooding and/or fires;
 - Providing airlift support to move emergency response crews and equipment in order to assist with flooding and/or fire operations;
- Humanitarian assistance:
 - Providing assistance to vulnerable, stranded or in-distress persons affected by floods, fires, or other climate-related emergencies;
 - Conducting welfare checks on persons in affected areas;
- General and logistical support:
 - Providing personnel to perform tasks to mitigate the effects of floods and fires, including the protection of critical infrastructure, access roads, and properties as designated by local authorities; and
 - Providing personnel and equipment for consequence management operations in designated areas affected by floods and/or wildfires.

It is vital that the CAF maintain operational readiness and force protection measures while we ensure a coordinated whole-of-government approach to responding to both natural disaster and COVID-19 emergency activities concurrently. To that end, I direct you to work with your Public Safety counterparts through a consultative mechanism to give you advice on the prioritization of competing requests for CAF assistance. In circumstances where that mechanism does not provide you the guidance you need to support your decision making, please inform me. Support to Provinces and Territories will still require a request by them in each separate instance (i.e. an approval for a request from one Province or Territory does not apply across the board).

The authorized assistance of the CAF in this document is to be regularly reviewed by senior Public Safety and DND/CAF officials, starting within the next 60 days, in order to determine whether any changes are necessary or whether the conditions are met for the termination of any approved support.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Harjit S. Sajjan', written in a cursive style.

The Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan, PC, OMM, MSM, CD, MP